

LANESBOROUGH FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES MAY 12, 2015

Attendees: Al Terranova, Ms. Chris Galib, Ron Tinkham, Stephen Wentworth and Greg Wolf, absent

Also Attending: Paul Sieloff, Town Administrator, Bruce Durwin, Town Accountant, Henry Sayers. Town Selectmen and Jim Neureuther, Chairman of the Tree and Forest Committee

Meeting called to order: 6:01 pm

Motions:

Approval of Minutes for April 21, 2015. Motion to accept with two minor corrections submitted by Mr. Tinkham, by Mr. Wentworth. Motion to second by Mr. Tinkham. All in favor.

Review and Finalize Town Budget Fiscal Year 2016:

Mr. Sieloff presented the Committee with the Budget approved by the Selectmen for presentation at the Town Meeting. He introduced the eleven budget item changes to his original Town Administrator's budget:

1. Selectmen Salaries. \$75 reduced from their budget as they declined the 2% salary increase.
2. Adding \$25K to the reserve fund.
3. Tax Titles. Account increased \$4k to pay consulting fees dealing with tax debts.
4. Energy Committee. New account requested by Bob Ericson, \$500 for small expenses throughout the year.
5. Plumbing, Gas, and Wire Inspectors. Budget reduced \$150. Salaries remain stable.
6. Elementary School. Decrease of \$22K.
7. Mount Greylock Regional. Selectmen decided not to grant the additional 45K for after school bus and teacher meetings.
8. Animal Inspector. Dropped 2%.
9. Northern Berkshire Waste. Increased \$247.
10. Town Insurance: \$18,307 down in premiums.
11. Additionally: Selectmen suggest tax rate of 2%, rather than 2-½%, difference to be offset somewhat by free cash.

The Committee discussed the levels of free cash, levy limit and the tax reserve overlay amount raised from the Assessors. Mr. Tinkham inquired about funds for anticipated legal fees related to the Mall and Baker Hill Road District.

Mr. Durwin and Mr. Sieloff provided the Committee with an explanation of the free cash, overlay and stabilization monies.

Three additional capital proposals that were added to the budget and supported by the Selectmen were introduced to the Committee:

1. **Energy Conservation:** Town received \$140k for energy conservation projects. \$10,000 has been set aside to meet matching funds by the Town.

2. Snow Removal on sidewalks. Should they be maintained by owners or cleared by highway department? This will be voted on and depending on the vote, \$60K may be spent for a Bobcat to clear snow or residents assume shoveling.

3. Pontoosuc Lake Drainage and Pavements Projects. \$15K included for various Pontoosuc projects. Mr. Terranova registered his concern that the Town will be maintaining private properties. Mr. Sieloff explained the monies are designate for public areas and funds are under the control of the Selectmen and only if a project is brought forward through proper channels.

Mount Greylock Budget The Committee reviewed questions to Mount Greylock at last meeting regarding E & D funds and giving Mount Greylock \$16K for after school transportation. Motion to add \$15,896 to the Mount Greylock budget portion of the Selectmen's proposed budget. Motion moved by Ms. Galib, seconded by Mr. Wentworth. Mr. Tinkham opposed. Motion passed 3 to 1. Funds to be taken from free cash.

Tree and Forest Committee request for increase of budget from \$275 to \$500. Budget Summary request presentation made by Mr. Neureuther, Chairman of Tree Committee. Committee agreed, no motion necessary.

Increase of Reserve Fund. Motion to increase to \$65K the reserve which is managed by Finance Committee. Motion to approve by Mr. Wentworth, seconded by Ms. Galib. All in favor.

Adopting Selectmen's Budget. Motion to adopt Selectmen's Budget moved by Ms. Galib with the addition of \$15,896 to the Mt. Greylock budget, seconded by Mr. Wentworth, Mr. Tinkham opposed. Motion passed 3 to 1.

Non-General Fund Budgets

Ambulance Enterprise Fund and Sewer Enterprise Fund. Motion to approved Ambulance Enterprise Fund and Sewer Enterprise Fund moved by Mr. Tinkham, seconded by Ms. Galib, without discussion. All in favor.

Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Those articles that relate to fiscal issues were reviewed by Mr. Sieloff with the Committee.

B. Budget Article, voted on tonight. Recommended.

C. Ambulance Fund. Recommended.

D. Sewer Fund. Recommended.

E. Baker Hill Road to pay police officers. Recommended.

F. Standard Article on Revolving Fund. Recommended. TV fund raised to \$10K at the request of Mr. Tinkham. Recommended.

G. \$20K into free cash for retiree health benefits recommended by auditors. Recommended.

H. \$20K repairs to the Town Hall. Recommended.

I. \$20K stabilization fund. Recommended..

J. Transfer from free cash \$100K to stabilization fund for Town fire truck. Recommended.

Motion on Articles B-J to recommend the Articles. Moved by Mr. Tinkham, seconded by Ms. Galib. No discussion. All in favor.

K. Purchase of Fire Truck. Motion to approve by Mr. Tinkham, seconded by Mr. Wentworth. All in favor.

L. \$10K for Energy Conservation Project. Motion to accept by Mr. Wentworth, second Ms. Galib. So moved, all in favor.

M. Pontoosuc Lake Projects. Motion of approve by Mr. Tinkham, Ms. Galib seconded. No discussion. All in favor.

N. Water Line Project Borrowing. Motion moved by Ms. Galib, seconded by Mr. Wentworth. All in favor.

P. Vote to rescind last year's vote to borrow \$50K. Motion to support by Ms. Galib, seconded by Mr. Wentworth. No discussion. All in favor.

R. Buying a Bobcat to clear sidewalks by borrowing \$60K. Motion to accept by Mr. Wentworth, seconded by Mr. Tinkham, for discussion. All in favor.

S. Standard language authorizing Treasurer to make expenditures related to Transportation Bond Bill. All in favor.

T. Use of Free Cash to Get Tax Rate Down to 2%. Mr. Tinkham moved to recommend.

Motion to accept Articles S and T by Mr. Tinkham, seconded by Ms. Galib. No discussion. All in favor.

U. Overlay Surplus. Motion to accept by Mr. Wentworth, second by Ms. Galib. No discussion. All in favor.

No other business.

Mr. Terranova requested a meeting prior to the Annual Town Meeting on June 1st at 6pm. Ms. Galib excused herself.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lorna Gayle

Approved June 1st, 2015

Attachments: Proposed Selectmen's Budget Spreadsheet, Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget, Ambulance Enterprise Fund Budget